THE YEAR IN FORESTRY

State and Private Forestry in the Northeast and Midwest Fiscal Year 2008

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Forest Service
Northeastern Area
State and Private Forestry
Newtown Square, PA 19073
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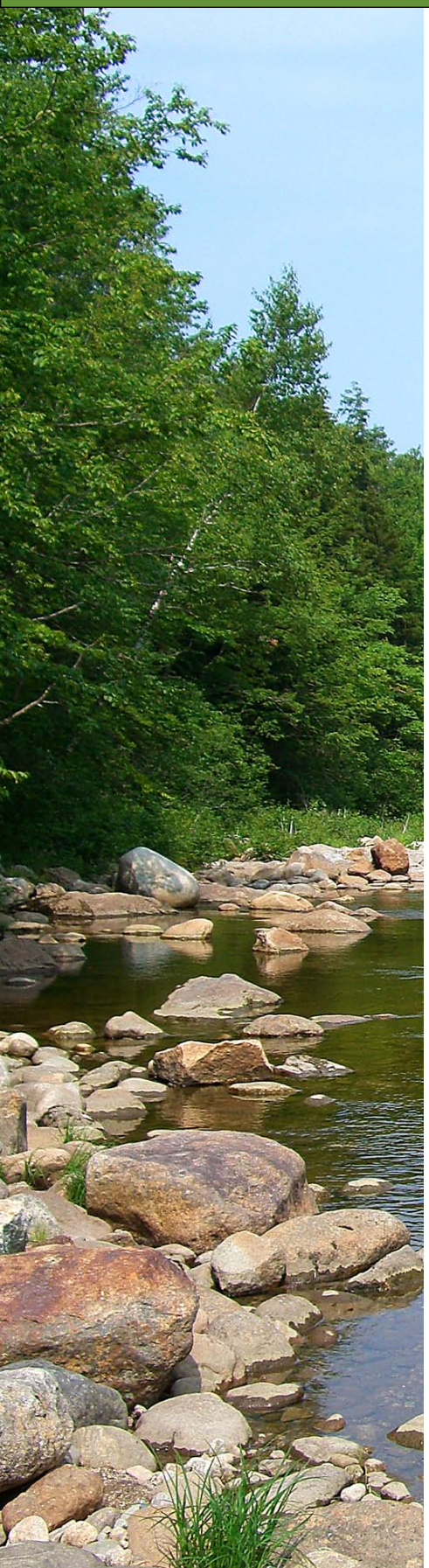

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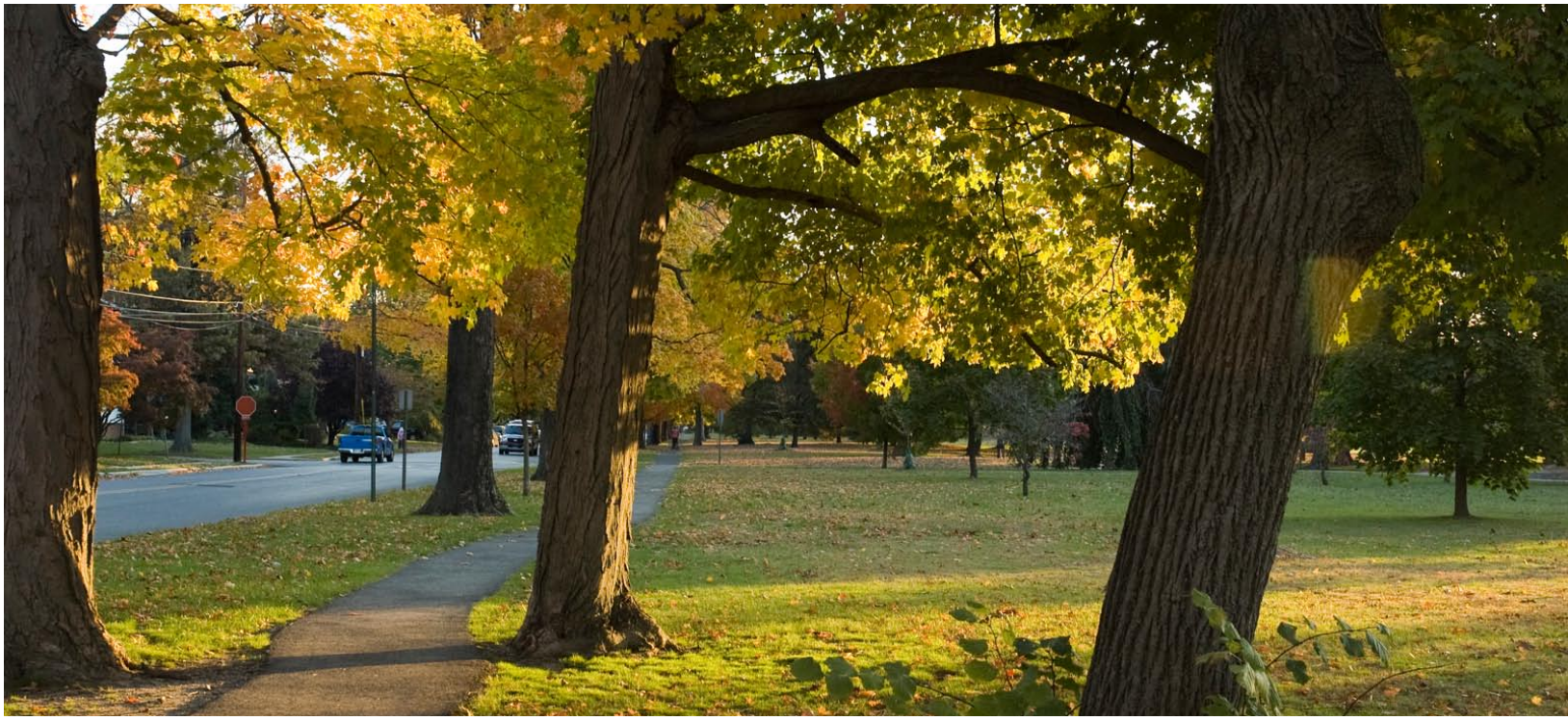
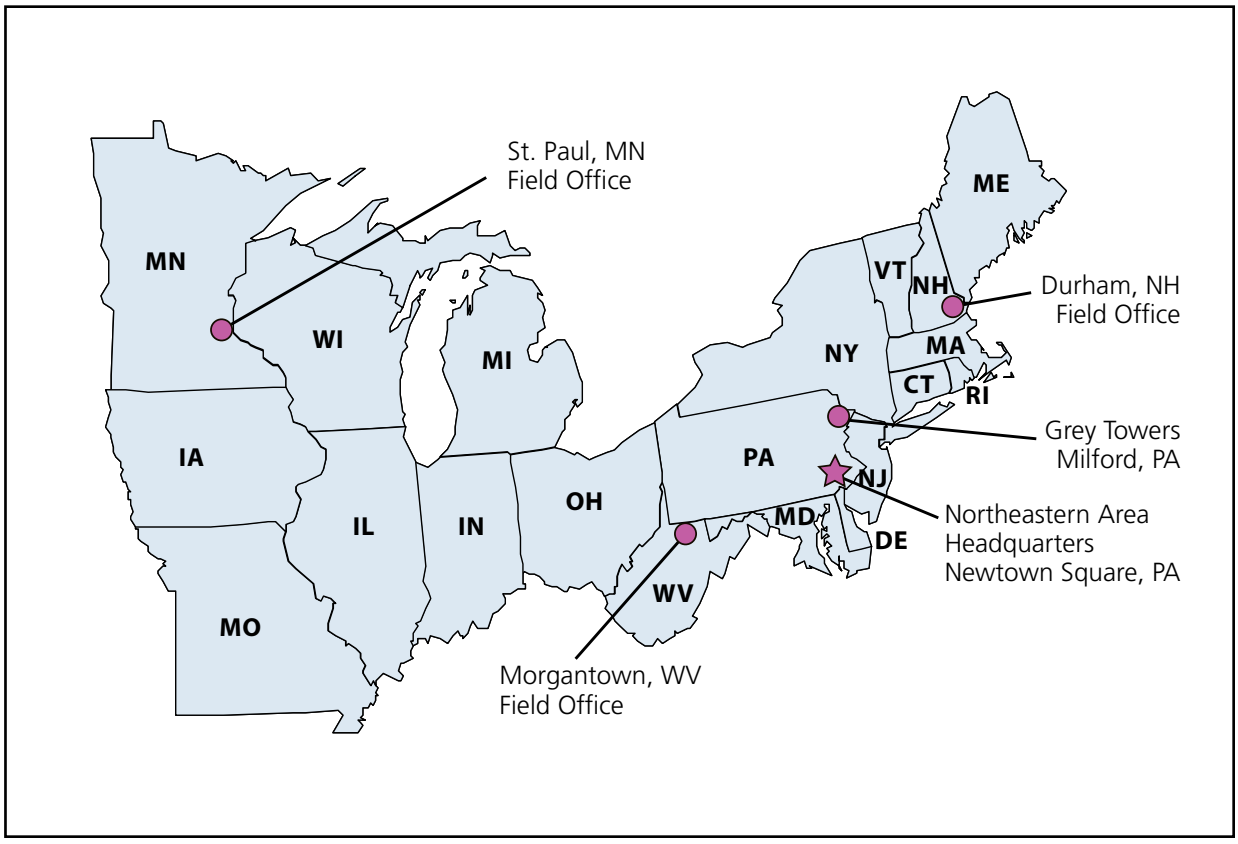




The Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry, which serves the 20 Northeastern and Midwestern States, is headquartered in Newtown Square, Pennsylvania. It maintains field offices in Durham, New Hampshire; Morgantown, West Virginia; and St. Paul, Minnesota; and manages the Grey Towers National Historic Site in Milford, Pennsylvania.

Northeastern Area
State and Private Forestry and its Forests

People, Forests, and Open Space in abundance: these are the true wealth of a Nation.

People and abundant open space come together in the Northeastern and Midwestern United States. In no other place do private landowners control a greater share of the landscape.

Globally, about 90 percent of wooded lands are publicly owned.[1] By contrast, private landowners in the 20 Northeastern and Midwestern States and the District of Columbia own 130 million acres, roughly 75 percent of the region's forest land.

This region contains one of the largest concentrations of privately owned forests in the world intermingled with the highest population density in the Nation.

The economic, social, and environmental benefits we enjoy from forests—clean water, recreation, and forest-related jobs and products—come largely from private land.

About the Northeast and Midwest:

- Home to 43 percent of the American population
- Site of 23 percent of the Nation's forests
- Location of nearly 600,000 forest-related jobs

Community trees and forests help control stormwater, improve air quality, mitigate urban heat islands, reduce energy needed for heating and cooling, and store carbon.

The public clearly benefits when landowners and communities have the tools they need to sustainably manage their forest resources—access to sound information about sustainable management, local policies that encourage managing and retaining open space, and affordable taxes.

The U.S. Forest Service, Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry (NAS&PF) serves 20 States in the Northeast and Midwest, and the District of Columbia, in partnership with State agencies and other organizations and partners.

Our mission:

To encourage and support sustainable management of the region's non-Federal forest land

Forests in Today's Complex World

- America's forests are a vital part of the solution to many of today's challenges. Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry (NAS&PF), the 20 Northeastern and Midwestern States served by NAS&PF, and the District of Columbia are all actively engaged in these areas:
- ***Global Climate Change:*** Healthy forests hold carbon in the wood, take in carbon dioxide and release oxygen, reduce air temperatures, and capture particles from the air.
- ***Renewable Energy:*** Scientists and engineers are developing exciting new ways to use wood from local sources to supply clean and renewable energy.
- ***The Economy:*** America's abundant forests produce some of the world's finest wood, providing jobs and contributing to local economies.
- ***Going Green:*** Entrepreneurs—and government—are responding to the public's growing interest in sustainable living. Examples include recycled wood products, using wood from urban tree removals (which also keeps it out of the landfill), and certification programs that assure products were sustainably produced.

In Fiscal Year 2008, NAS&PF and its State partners provided education, technical assistance, and grants that positively influenced the management of millions of acres in rural forests and in communities. For example:

[1] Food and Agriculture Organization. 2005. Global Forest Resources Assessment 2005. ftp://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/008/A0400E/A0400E08.pdf. (23 March, 2009).

Urban and Community Forestry

Nearly 75 percent of the region's people live in communities served by this program. Citizens dedicated well over one-half million hours to local projects.

Landowner Assistance

Collectively, landowners developed new Stewardship Plans for more than 723,000 acres of forest land. About 42 percent of these acres were previously targeted as high priority due to their environmental value.

Fire

One hundred twenty-one at-risk communities completed Community Wildfire Protection Plans. Hazardous fuels were reduced on more than 103,000 acres, adding a greater margin of safety for citizens living in the urban-wildland interface.

Forest Health

This program and its partners treated more than 750,000 acres to slow the spread of the gypsy moth, saving landowners and taxpayers millions in treatment costs and damage to forests. Using the Slow the Spread Program approach is three times more cost effective than the economic impact of allowing natural spread.

Forest Legacy

NAS&PF States protected 105,000 acres under the Forest Legacy Program in Fiscal Year 2008, bringing the total to well over 1 million acres since the program began about a decade ago. States served by NAS&PF accounted for 54 percent of the acres protected nationally in Fiscal Year 2008, yet spent just 27 percent of the total Federal program budget.

Watershed Forestry

Since 1996, this initiative has supported the restoration of more than 6,000 miles of land (riparian buffer) along the region's waterways. Laid end to end, these buffers would reach from the east coast to California and back.

Grey Towers

After extensive and much-needed renovations, this facility is uniquely positioned to provide conservation education and leadership training in the 21st century. Conference facilities and other visitor services have been substantially upgraded. Program attendance is up 12 percent over Fiscal Year 2007 after adjusting for fire fund transfers, and contributions to the Grey Towers Fund are up 10 percent over the same period.

Redesign: A Fresh Approach to Delivering State and Private Forestry Programs

Focus + Priority = Outcome

Many of America's forests are confronting urgent threats. Wildfires, imported insects and diseases, land conversion, and economic pressures are just some of the factors that claim millions of acres every year. The need—and the demand for—technical and financial assistance have never been greater. Yet shrinking budgets require that we do more with less.

Federal and State cooperation has proven to be an effective model for achieving program goals and attracting additional resources to supplement taxpayer dollars.

Expanding upon that theme, the U.S. Forest Service and the National Association of State Foresters (NASF) launched a "Redesigned" State and Private Forestry in 2008. Under the program, the Forest Service and the States will gradually shift more resources from the traditional "first-come, first-served" model to one that focuses investments where they will make the greatest difference on the landscape.

Redesign is based on three simple ideas:

Focus on important national themes:

- Conserve working forest landscapes
- Protect forests from harm
- Enhance public benefits from trees and forests

Priorities based on current conditions and trends

Outcomes that are meaningful and demonstrate accomplishments

Resource Assessments and Response Plans are critical tools for setting program and staffing priorities. A geographically based National Assessment and decision support system under development will facilitate national priority setting by allowing users to identify and understand forest conditions, trends, and opportunities.

States are working with local partners and stakeholders to develop State Assessments. Designed to be compatible with national measures, state-based assessments will identify high-priority landscapes and needs.

Once national and State assessments are complete, each State will develop a State Response Plan to describe how it will achieve priority outcomes with Federal dollars and other resources.

Competitive Grants are a key component of the Redesign concept, directing a greater portion of overall funding to critical needs. For Fiscal Year 2008, 15 percent of grants were awarded competitively. That percentage will gradually increase over a period of several years.

Measuring Results is a critical step for managing change. An Annual Report Card will document outcomes using performance indicators, maps and charts, and success stories.

NAS&PF is an active participant in the Redesign process. It awarded 29 grants under the new program in Fiscal Year 2008. Projects are currently underway.

Redesign Projects: A Sampler

The Hudson River and the New York/New Jersey Harbor estuary supply critical drinking water and fish habitat, yet receive 27 billion gallons of raw sewage and polluted stormwater yearly. One tree can reduce runoff by 13,000 gallons a year. With the latest science and community participation, "working greenspace" will be installed on priority sites to protect this important watershed.

Maryland's utility commission warns that, without immediate action, the State will face mandatory usage restrictions, such as rolling blackouts, by 2012. A partial answer: 800,000 tons of urban wood debris generated each year. Under a Redesign grant, a wood energy installation at a major facility will move from concept to installation in 3 years.

In Wisconsin's Lake Superior Basin, runoff forced boil water warnings for thousands of residents. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) used NAS&PF-wide protocols to assess the potential of forests to control runoff. Using satellite images to locate and target critical lands, the WDNR is providing information to forest management professionals and assisting landowners in critical areas to reduce runoff and improve water quality in the future.

Grey Towers National Historic Site

"The earth and its resources belong of right to its people."

—Gifford Pinchot

Grey Towers National Historic Site, the only site of its kind administered by the U.S. Forest Service, is set on 102 acres in Milford, PA. It is the ancestral home of U.S. Forest Service founder and first chief, Gifford Pinchot. Grey Towers was donated to the public by the Pinchot family in 1963 and later dedicated by President John F. Kennedy.

This unique and historic French chateau mansion is an ideal venue for promoting conservation. With the help of public and private partnerships, Grey Towers carries on the Pinchot legacy through education and interpretation, leadership development and conferencing, and historic preservation.

Grey Towers supports national program goals under the umbrella of the NAS&PF strategic plan.

How Grey Towers advances the Strategic Plan and Business Plan:

GOAL 1 – Promote sustainable forest management

Objective B: Sustain the productive capacity of private forest land

Fiscal Year 2008 Highlights

Grey Towers placed greater emphasis on partnerships, strengthening its relationships with regional arts and conservation organizations, State and Federal agencies, and local communities.

Interpretation and Conservation Education

- Provided interpretive tours and programs to 14,828 visitors
- Implemented an evaluation program
- Delivered curriculum-based conservation education to more than 1,300 children

Leadership and Conference Center

- Program participation was up 12 percent from Fiscal Year 2007 and 19 percent from Fiscal Year 2006 (after adjusting for the transfer of fire funds)
- Added a conference coordinator and programs in Leadership Renewal and Facilitator Training to boost facility use and improve user experiences

Financial

- Increased contributions to the Grey Towers Fund by 10 percent over Fiscal Year 2007
- Raised the value of volunteer work by 21 percent over Fiscal Year 2007 after revamping the recruitment process

Site and Asset Management

- Established a green team, expanded recycling, purchased energy efficient vehicles, and began a transition to electronic outreach materials
- Catalogued a large donation of Pinchot papers; reinventoried, labeled, and rehoused historic papers and artifacts
- Completed site upgrades and repairs, including expanded deer fencing, rehabilitation of the swimming pool terrace, and final stages of the Visitor Services project

Grey Towers, built in a French chateau style that reflects the Pinchot family heritage, is nestled among the trees on a tranquil 102 acres in Milford, Pennsylvania.

A Festival of Wood

The annual Festival of Wood is attracting a larger audience and a growing list of partners each year. At the fourth Festival of Wood, more than 3,000 festival-goers learned about sustainable forestry in ways that demonstrate the beauty, versatility, and utility of wood. Exhibits, demonstrations, and children's programs included a concert featuring woodwind instruments, unique arts and crafts, tips on reducing our carbon footprint, and the use of wood throughout history.

A newly added Wood in Building exhibit was presented in cooperation with a regional builders' association. In addition, NAS&PF's Wood Education and Resource Center distributed educational materials and the Durham, NH, Field Office exhibited its Next Generation landowner initiative and a program on alternative forest products.

Forest Legacy Program

To keep critical forests intact, and to assure that they are protected and managed, is to support a sustainable future.

The Forest Legacy Program permanently protects important forests threatened by development. The program offers assistance and funds to participating States, local governments, nonprofit groups, and willing landowners.

Most lands are protected with conservation easements—landowners sell their development rights, but continue to own, use, and pay taxes on their land. A management plan is required.

How the Program advances the Strategic Plan and Business Plan:

GOAL 1 – Promote sustainable forest management

Objective A: Conserve the biological diversity of high-priority forest land at risk of conversion and fragmentation

State Excels in Protecting Special Places

Maine is a long-time leader in the Forest Legacy Program—and boasts the top-rated proposal nationally for 2009. Partners conserved 33,800 acres in 2008. They have secured easements on 88 percent of the upper Machias watershed, protecting water quality and ensuring sustainable forest management and public access for future generations.

Fiscal Year 2008 Highlights

Connecticut
Conservation easement on the first of several Litchfield County tracts; remaining tracts are in progress. **Benefit:** Water quality in western Connecticut.

Delaware
Proposal for 876-acre tract; sixth phase of land acquisition in and around the Redden State Forest. **Benefit:** Protection for one of the State's few remaining unbroken expanses of forest land.

Illinois
Funded a seventh tract in the Oblate/La Vista area near existing Forest Legacy tracts. **Benefit:** Conserve oak/hickory forest and vistas along the Mississippi and a National Scenic Route.

Indiana
Added conservation easement monitoring responsibility for 6,658 acres of Forest Legacy tracts to District Foresters' job descriptions. **Benefit:** Assure compliance with easement terms.

Iowa
Protected two Driftless Region forests totaling 438 acres. **Benefits:** Ongoing timber management and economic opportunity in the Allamakee area; enhance other watershed protection projects of the Upper Mississippi River Forest Partnership.

Massachusetts
Conservation easement on a 100-year-old Fresh Air Camp for disadvantaged urban youth in Athol/New Salem. **Benefits:** Open space; outdoor experiences for future campers.

Maryland
Geographic Information Technology was used to determine if changes are needed to Forest Legacy Areas. **Benefit:** Effective use of technology to target areas most in need of protection.

Michigan
Protected nearly 37,000 acres across the Upper Peninsula, including 3,300 acres in the Two-Hearted River watershed, once featured in a Hemingway story. **Benefit:** Protects important natural and cultural resources.

Minnesota
Completed cost share on a four-phase project. **Benefits:** Public recreation access, timber and forest industry jobs, complements Upper Mississippi River Forest Partnership projects.

Missouri
First project approved, a block of land near St Louis. **Benefit:** Buffer wolf-breeding project from human activities, open space near a major metropolitan area.

New Jersey
Funded three tracts totaling 2,200 acres in the heart of the Federally designated New York/ New Jersey Highlands Region. **Benefit:** Protect drinking water for roughly 10 percent of the United States population.

New Hampshire
Conservation easement on more than 1,660 acres surrounding the Robb Reservoir. **Benefit:** Outstanding waterfowl and warm water fishery habitats.

New York
Purchased the Tahawus property in the southern High Peaks of the Adirondacks. **Benefit:** Outstanding lake, pond, and stream fisheries available to the public for the first time.

Ohio
Conservation easement on a 436-acre industrial forest long owned by Superior Hardwoods of Ohio, Inc. **Benefit:** Continuing management for high-value wood products.

Pennsylvania
Protected the 1,765-acre Birdsboro property and reservoir. **Benefit:** Clean water and outdoor recreation.

Rhode Island
Protected 45 acres adjacent to 386 acres of conservation land. **Benefit:** Ongoing scientific and educational access to an unusual feature—the surface water and the underground water flow to different watersheds, each feeding drinking water supplies.

Vermont
Protected nearly 3,000 acres in seven tracts. **Benefit:** Open space and a section of the Long Trail, the country's oldest hiking trail.

Wisconsin
Funded a multipartner 14,576-acre project next to National Forest, State, and county forests. **Benefit:** Part of a protected corridor extending from Menominee Indian lands to the Keweenaw Peninsula.

West Virginia
Completed the State's first Forest Legacy conservation easement, 764 acres along the South Branch of the Potomac River. **Benefit:** Protect drinking water for Washington, DC, and water that flows to the Chesapeake Bay.

Close to 37,000 acres were protected across Michigan's Upper Peninsula in Fiscal Year 2008, including this pristine pond.

Landowner Assistance Programs

Forest landowners who commit to sustainable management contribute to society's economic, environmental, and social health. Moreover, they bequeath these benefits to future generations.

States within Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry are home to more than 5 million private forest landowners. Under the Forest Stewardship Program, landowners set management objectives and write a Forest Stewardship Plan with the help of a professional forester. The Forest Land Enhancement Program (FLEP) offers educational and financial assistance to landowners for sustainable forestry. States develop a State Priority Plan, sharing up to 75 percent of costs.

How the Program advances the Strategic Plan and Business Plan:

GOAL 1 – Promote sustainable forest management

Objective B: Sustain the productive capacity of private forest land

Strategic Business Plan: High Emphasis Action:
Promote harvesting methods that maintain and improve forest and land health and productivity through stewardship planning.

Fiscal Year 2008 Highlights

State Foresters completed more than 10,000 new Forest Stewardship Plans on 704,309 acres. Plans give landowners the information and advice they need to set and achieve their management objectives using sustainable forest management.

Do landowners follow through on their Stewardship Plans? States launched onsite monitoring to find out. Results show that 90 percent of the acres under current Stewardship Plans are being managed sustainably.

More than 32,000 acres of *new* forests were established for such diverse purposes as water quality, wildlife habitat, windbreaks, and forest products. Improvements were completed on more than 243,000 acres of existing forests for similar purposes and to reduce threats from insects, diseases, and wildfires.

Landowners sustainably harvested timber on more than 220,000 acres of forest across the region, guided by Stewardship Plans and resource professionals.

The Spatial Analysis Project helps States identify and map forests most in need of program assistance. This year, States reported the location of forests that have Stewardship Plans with respect to the land's stewardship potential. NAS&PF States are the first to jointly address new national spatial reporting requirements.

Private consultants handled more than 12,000 referrals to oversee timber sales, generating about $18 million ($1,500 per referral) in income and ensuring sustainable practices.

What legacy will today's generation leave for those that follow? Sustainable forest management means meeting today's needs without "borrowing" from future generations.

Whose Woods are These?

As the "greatest generation" and baby boomers move through the life cycle over the next 15 or so years, America will experience the largest transfer of land ownership in its history. If owners and their heirs are unprepared, this could lead to widespread forest fragmentation, subdivision, and development.

NAS&PF has launched the *Next Generation* Initiative to provide estate and succession planning information to current landowners of all ages and the people who advise them. The "Next Gen" message is being spread through newsletters, workshops, trade shows, and publications. The National Association of Conservation Districts is a key partner. Nine States have joined the initiative, with more to follow.

Forest Health Protection

Healthy forests and trees are vital to environmental, economic, and social well-being. Regular monitoring is key to protecting forest health.

Forests are exposed to pests, extreme weather, wildfires, and pollution. While stressors cannot always be prevented, swift action can limit their impact.

The Forest Health Protection Program provides expert assistance for forest health monitoring and assessments. Some cost-share funds are available if treatment is needed. The staff serves national forests and other Federal lands, Tribal governments, and States. Private lands are served through partnerships with State and local governments.

How the Program advances the Strategic Plan and Business Plan:

GOAL 1 – Promote sustainable forest management

Objective C – Maintain the health and vitality of forest ecosystems at risk from potentially damaging agents

Strategic Business Plan: High Emphasis Action:
Coordinate with State partners in all 20 States on annual pest detection surveys across ownerships and report within national guidelines.

Stalking the Emerald Ash Borer

The emerald ash borer (EAB), an imported pest, kills the ash trees it infests. Because regular monitoring techniques are ineffective, serious damage can occur before the insect is detected. Delays allow the insects more time to establish themselves and spread.

Specialists have a new monitoring tool thanks to a Canadian graduate student. He discovered that many types of native wasps line their nests with the bodies of certain beetle species, including EAB where they are present. So, researchers can monitor the wasps, leading them to possible new discoveries of emerald ash borer.

A recent NAS&PF study indicates that the region has enough of the right species of wasps to support the new monitoring technique. It has started a multistate monitoring program.

Fiscal Year 2008 Highlights

- Completed the revision of the national Gypsy Moth Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement
- Completed assessments and surveys on more than 233 million acres of public and private forest land:

Federal Lands	23.1 million acres
Private/State/Local Lands	219.4 million acres
Total	233.4 million acres

Invasive Pests

Gypsy Moth:

- Treated 558.5 million acres to slow the spread
- Completed 18 environmental assessments on State and Federal sites

Hemlock Woolly Adelgid:

- Completed detection and monitoring surveys in Maryland, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Ohio, and New Jersey
- Treated sites in Maryland, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia and four Federal sites: Delaware Water Gap, New River Gorge, Morristown National Historic Park, and Gettysburg
- Released and monitored predatory insects in Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and at two Federal sites; began rearing predators in New England

Emerald Ash Borer:

- Distributed identification kits to Sate and Federal land managers
- Surveyed all Federal lands in nine States
- Participated on multiagency task forces to coordinate activities and outreach

Other Pests: NAS&PF was actively involved in projects to detect and control Sirex wood wasp, sudden oak death, oak wilt, bacterial leaf scorch, and others.

Hemlock trees at the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area are treated with insecticides to protect them from hemlock woolly adelgid. The site will be monitored to see if the treatment was effective.

Urban and Community Forestry Program

A community that cares for its trees invests in its air, water, and economy, and it conserves energy; in short, it invests in its people.

Program Goals:

- Support citizens as they work to enhance their natural environment to improve their economic, social, and environmental well-being
- Encourage "smart growth" to minimize the loss of valuable trees and forests
- Implement monitoring and management practices that contribute to urban forest health

Technical and financial assistance helps to support urban forest inventories, assessments, planning and policy development, education, public awareness, and tree planting and maintenance.

A Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry specialist checks a maple log in Worcester, MA, for signs of the Asian longhorned beetle. Infested wood must be chipped and burned to halt spread of the insect.

How the Program advances the Strategic Plan and Business Plan:

GOAL 2 – Enhance the capacity of forests to provide public benefits

Objective D: Maintain and enhance the benefits communities within metropolitan areas derive from their forests and trees

Strategic Business Plan: High Emphasis Action:

Forest Health and Urban and Community Forestry Program staff and State agencies will target a set of high-risk communities in Ohio, Michigan, New York, Wisconsin, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Indiana, Illinois, and West Virginia to develop ash management plans to prepare for the emerald ash borer threat.

Fiscal Year 2008 Highlights

States added 194 communities to those with active urban and community forestry programs, which now total more than 3,700.

Nearly 75 percent of the region's people live in municipalities that benefit from the program.

One-third of the funds distributed to States went directly to communities and local groups as small grants. State and local interests added nearly $5 worth of money, labor, and supplies for every Federal dollar.

NAS&PF and the Center for Watershed Protection published the last in a series of online *Urban Watershed Forestry* manuals. More than 50,000 copies have been downloaded from www.forestsforwatersheds.org.

More than 120 people attended combined remote and in-person training on developing community forest management plans. Roughly two dozen on-demand Webcasts delivered 1,000 hours of training.

The U.S. Forest Service Northern Research Station is working with NAS&PF to assess urban trees and help communities set tree planting goals, emphasizing the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Projects include cities in Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Vermont, Rhode Island, and Iowa. The two Forest Service branches are also integrating geographic data tools across the urban and rural spectrum to assist State forestry agencies with setting priorities and State Response Plans as required in the 2008 Farm Bill legislation.

NAS&PF, the Arbor Day Foundation, and The Home Depot Foundation hosted 300 attendees at the *Partners in Community Forestry* national conference.

A Deadly Threat to Maple Trees

The city of Worcester, MA, is the site of the largest known infestation of Asian longhorned beetle in the United States. If unchecked, this insect could kill maples in forests and communities, devastating the maple sugar and furniture industries. NAS&PF, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and the city are working together to eradicate the beetle. They also have a plan to replace some of the trees and related ecosystem services lost to the insect.

Watershed Forestry

Clean water is a necessity. To sustain life, to grow crops, and to support commerce, society can invent no substitute.

More than 52 million of the region's people consume water from forested watersheds. Yet, 75 percent of waters in the Northeast and Midwest fall short of at least some water quality or fisheries goals. Problems often stem from poor land use practices in the past. Trees are living filters that offer an important part of the solution.

The Watershed Program is a multidisciplinary initiative that spans political boundaries and reaches thousands of landowners and communities that collectively impact watershed health.

How the Program advances the Strategic Plan and Business Plan:

GOAL 1 – Promote sustainable forest management

Objective D: Protect and enhance the health of watersheds

Strategic Business Plan: High Emphasis Action:
Establish a new partnership with the Natural Resources Conservation Service to coordinate delivery of Farm Bill programs to landowners in high-priority watersheds and initiate actions to measure the effects of actions taken on water quality and habitat.

Fiscal Year 2008 Highlights

Best Management Practices

The Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry Harvesting Best Management Practices Assessment Protocol helps users identify and prevent sediment associated with forest harvests from reaching streams. Software updates and training sessions were provided to foresters and loggers across several States.

Watershed Partnerships

New York City

- Held 20 tours for a total of 1,000 students
- Completed 60 Stewardship Plans on 12,000 acres
- Trained 87 loggers and 80 foresters

Potomac River

- *Growing Native* volunteers gathered thousands of pounds of tree seeds, which will be grown at a State nursery for future plantings
- Protected 400 acres of critical lands

Upper Mississippi

- Jointly funded seven watershed restoration projects with the Fish and Wildlife Foundation; Federal funds drew double the amount in matching dollars
- Expanded the Memorandum of Understanding to include seven new organizations

White River, Vermont

- Conserved 1.5 miles of river corridor; replanted 38 acres
- Expanded the volunteer network by 50 percent

Highlands Conservation

The draft Connecticut/ Pennsylvania Highlands study was a strong focus in Fiscal Year 2008 and will be released for public comment. The study assesses the region's natural resources and the effects of land use change, and identifies critical lands at risk from development.

Other Activities

- In cooperation with the Center for Watershed Protection, trained more than 1,000 urban planners, landscapers, administrators, homeowners, developers, and others on ways to increase urban tree cover.
- New Web-based programs—Bay Bank and LandServer—will soon offer reporting and analysis tools for landowners and operators. Users can determine their eligibility for current and emerging ecosystem markets and conservation programs.
- Partnered with the Delaware government and local organizations to plant 35 acres of forest buffers and two school yard habitats, and to restore an educational habitat. Volunteers contributed more than 1,000 hours to the projects.

Restoring the Chesapeake Bay

Rich in natural and cultural resources, from its world-renowned crab to its status as a top boating destination, the Chesapeake Bay is in peril from widespread pollution and runoff.

The Chesapeake Bay Program, a pact among the States of Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and the District of Columbia, is working to restore the Bay and its watershed. In 2008, cooperators restored 460 miles of streamside forests, raising the total to more than 6,000 miles since 1996. Sixty communities set tree cover goals. Forty-one thousand acres were protected under the Chesapeake Forest Conservation Directive.

Municipal officials learn about the link between trees and clean water in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. The white tubes seen in the background are protecting newly planted trees.

Wood Education and Resource Center

Wood, an ancient source of energy and building material, is still a practical, earth-friendly option for the 21st century.

The Wood Education and Resource Center (WERC) in Princeton, WV, facilitates interaction and provides information to forest industries in 35 hardwood-producing States, fostering efficiency, sustainable operations, and adoption of new technology. WERC funded 26 competitive projects in 2008 totaling $1.7 million.

WERC houses a production facility, currently leased by Accurate Millworks, Inc., which employs 20 workers. The company provides jobs, generates economic activity, and offers an American-made alternative to imported products.

How the Program advances the Strategic Plan and Business Plan:

GOAL 2 – Enhance the capacity of forests to provide public benefits

Objective 2A: Promote and encourage the viability of forest-based industries

Objective 2B: Help the Northeast and Midwest to meet their needs for renewable energy, to reduce greenhouse gases, and to conserve energy

Strategic Business Plan: High Emphasis Actions:

- Provide timely information and links on the WERC Web page related to utilization and marketing of wood products, including woody biomass
- Utilize annual competitive grants to include emerald ash borer-killed timber utilization projects

Interest in Wood Energy Heats Up

Wood has great potential to reduce the Nation's dependence on fossil fuels. Because of Northern New England's high energy costs and abundant wood supply, several District wood energy projects are being evaluated. In Maine, the Caribou school district is converting from oil to wood and solar energy, which is expected to save $100,000 annually.

Fiscal Year 2008 Highlights

Treatment of Wood Packaging Materials

New international regulations are aimed at reducing the spread of invasive species. WERC and the West Virginia University Appalachian Hardwood Center provided information and training to aid manufacturers in complying with the new regulations. www.ahc.caf.wvu.edu/index.php?option=com_content&task=section&id=8&Itemid=60.

Trade Opportunities with China

WERC and the University of Wisconsin produced a publication to assist wood producers interested in exporting goods to China. http://nrs.fs.fed.us/pubs/gtr/gtr_nrs35.pdf

Employee Ownership in the Forest Products Industry

WERC and Wood Innovations, LLC, of Wisconsin produced an industry guide on the establishment, opportunities, and challenges of Employee Stock Ownership Plans. www.fwe.wisc.edu/extension/esop.html.

Training and Education

WERC conducted six onsite workshops and sponsored more than 25 remote or Web sessions. Topics included green building, wood industry management, manufacturing practices and systems, new software programs, and domestic and global markets.

Biomass Harvesting and Community Fire Plans

WERC, Eastern Region national forests, and a Wisconsin logging firm are working to expand biomass harvesting in and around the Nicolet National Forest. Finding commercial uses for the wood will lower the cost of implementing these plans as it generates economic benefits. In Minnesota, WERC and national forest staff members are facilitating similar activities near the Superior and Chippewa National Forests.

An engineer at the Crotched Mountain Rehabilitation Center in western New Hampshire points out the inner workings of the facility's woody biomass heating plant.

Cooperative Fire Protection Program

Prevention and strong, rapid response: cornerstones of an effective wildfire program.

Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry (NAS&PF) offers a comprehensive cooperative fire program that includes State Fire Assistance, Volunteer Fire Assistance, the Federal Excess Personal Property Program, the Firefighter Property Program, Aviation Management, and the National Fire Plan. These programs seek to:

- Boost wildland firefighting capacity
- Target high-risk communities and hazardous fuel areas, and reduce hazardous fuels
- Assist departments with acquiring fire and safety equipment
- Train firefighters
- Organize new departments in underprotected communities
- Support multistate/Canadian province Forest Fire Compacts, which pledge mutual aid during a catastrophic wildfire

How the Program advances the Strategic Plan and Business Plan:

GOAL 2 – Enhance the capacity of forests to provide public benefits

Objective 2C: Help communities at risk from wildland fire protect lives, property, and natural resources

Strategic Business Plan: High Emphasis Action:
Treat lands around fire-prone communities within 2 miles of national forest or other Federal land, combining State Fire Assistance and Hazardous Fuels Reduction funds to accomplish the work.

Fiscal Year 2008 Highlights

The National Fire Plan provides additional assistance to high-risk communities in fire-prone areas, starting with development of a Community Wildfire Protection Plan. States developed 121 plans, risk assessments, or equivalent plans in 2008.

Southern Illinois University is facilitating the development of three Community Wildfire Protection Plans covering 20 high-risk communities adjacent to the Shawnee National Forest.

The State Fire Assistance Program supported State preparedness and delivered wildland firefighter training to nearly 20,000 State or local fire staff. Fire personnel delivered nearly 5,000 community education programs, reaching one-half million citizens.

Reducing the Risk of Devastating Wildfires

Many communities are literally "in the line of fire," living in the shadow of forests with dangerously high volumes of hazardous fuels. Through funding made available by the State Fire Assistance Program and the National Fire Plan, States used prescribed fires to treat 100,423 acres of hazardous fuels near at-risk communities. Fire wasn't a viable option on another 3,101 acres, so hazardous fuels were reduced by mechanical means.

Volunteer Fire Assistance grants were awarded to 7,500 communities with fewer than 10,000 people. Funds were used to purchase or refurbish more than $3.84 million in equipment, organize seven new fire departments, and train more than 12,000 firefighters.

Department of Defense Firefighter Property Program

Indiana, Iowa, and Connecticut joined the program, bringing the number of participating NAS&PF States to 10. States acquired ownership to more than $24.7 million in equipment, most assigned to volunteer fire departments.

Federal Excess Personal Property Program

Communities received loaned excess government equipment for conversion to fire trucks and emergency response vehicles. With $9 million in new acquisitions, States are now using property worth $233.4 million.

It may seem out of control, but this is a prescribed fire used to reduce hazardous fuels on Martha's Vineyard in Massachusetts.

Selected Accomplishments–Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry, FY 2008

	Results
Forest Legacy Program	
Number of tracts protected	29
Acres protected	105,021
Acres protected by Forest Legacy Program (total for all years)	1,165,218
Forest Health Protection Program	
Acres treated for insects or diseases	784,762
Acres surveyed and/or monitored (million)	242.5
Grey Towers National Historic Site	
Visitors, tours, and public programs	14,828
Children attending education programs	1,348
Cooperative Fire Protection Program	
National Fire Plan	
Hazardous acres treated with prescribed fire	100,423
Hazardous acres treated mechanically	3,101
Community Protection Plans (number)	121
Firefighters trained (number)	19,911
Volunteer assistance grants to small communities	7,465
Community education programs (number)	4,918
People attending community programs (number)	500,000
Forest Stewardship Program	
Number of technical assists to landowners	50,437
Acres owned by landowners receiving educational services	60,140
Acres under Stewardship Plans (all years)	3,140,064
Acres in new or revised Stewardship Plans	723,689
Percentage of new acres on priority lands	44
Number of new or revised Stewardship Plans	9,449
Urban and Community Forestry Program	
Communities with management plans (number)	2,423
People living in communities assisted (million)	74
Urban Forestry Program cost per capita in communities assisted	$0.08
Annual Federal cost per citizen in active communities	$0.08
Volunteer hours contributed	557,509
Watershed Forestry Program	
Chesapeake Bay: riparian buffers restored (miles)	460
New York City Watershed: Watershed Stewardship Plans (acres)	12,000
Wood Education and Resource Center	
Number of projects funded	26
Value of funded projects (million)	$1.7

By the Numbers: Measuring Success on the Ground

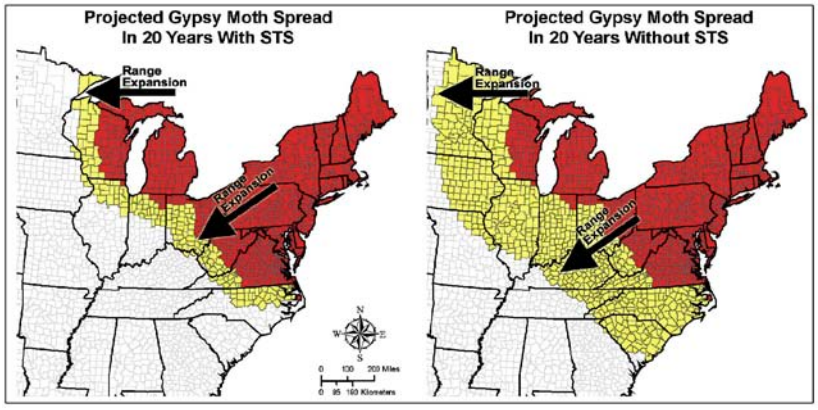
Numbers may not tell the entire story, but they are essential to evaluating whether an organization is successfully carrying out its mission.

Despite their limitations, numbers provide important information about questions such as these: Do benefits accrue to a select few or does the public as a whole benefit from the agency's efforts? Do programs address the full range of environmental, social, and economic aspects of sustainable forestry? The most fundamental question of all is: "Are we making a difference on the land and to people's quality of life?"

The answers to those questions are uniformly positive. To illustrate:

- In Fiscal Year 2008, new geographic data allowed program managers to target resources to high-priority areas for the first time. More than 40 percent of new Stewardship Plans were developed for these critically important lands.
- Urban and Community Forestry program assistance to communities benefited more than 74 million residents at a cost of just eight cents per capita.
- Without the gypsy moth Slow the Spread Program, scientists estimate that an additional 150 million acres of forest would be infested over the next 20 years, costing millions in lost forest products and services and greatly increasing eradication costs for States and individual landowners.
- On-the-ground accomplishments reflected in the numbers influence far more than the immediate surroundings. Many effects are hard to quantify but important to consider.
- Watershed forestry projects in upstate New York improve New York City's drinking water and reduce its treatment costs.
- The trees that replace pavement at many of Baltimore's inner city schools not only provide an educational resource and a safe place to play, but contribute to the community's air quality, reduce stormwater runoff, and reduce the urban heat island effect.
- The more than 8 million acres of privately owned forest land that benefited from the Forest Stewardship and Forest Legacy Programs over the last decade will help mitigate a projected loss of 12 million acres to development across the region by the year 2030.

Moreover, actively managed forests sequester significantly more carbon than unmanaged forests. Wood products also reduce carbon emissions by replacing other materials that produce more carbon during production and use, such as steel.



The map on the left shows the projected spread of the gypsy moth with the Slow the Spread (STS) program in place. The map on the right shows the projected spread without the program.

Investment in State and Private Forestry Programs by the Northeastern Area Fiscal Years 2006, 2007, 2008 (millions)			
	FY 2006	**FY 2007**	**FY 2008***
Forest Health Management			
Forest Health Management - Federal lands	7.8	9.3	10.3
Forest Health Management - Cooperative Lands	19.0	18.7	17.6
Subtotal Forest Health	**26.8**	**28.0**	**27.9**
Cooperative Fire Protection			
State Fire Assistance	6.9	7.4	7.0
Volunteer Fire Assistance	2.3	2.3	2.3
National Fire Plan	10.9	11.4	8.6
Subtotal Fire	**20.1**	**21.1**	**17.9**
Cooperative Forestry			
Forest Stewardship	12.1	15.1	11.4
Urban and Community Forestry	10.5	10.3	10.2
Forest Legacy	29.0	23.3	25.5
Economic Action Programs	3.4	0.2	2.2
Subtotal Cooperative Forestry	**55.0**	**48.9**	**49.3**
Other			
Grey Towers	2.3	1.9	1.9
Forest Health Technology Enterprise Team	1.6	1.0	1.0
Reimbursables	1.4	2.1	2.4
Subtotal Other	**5.3**	**5.0**	**5.3**
Total All Programs	**107.2**	**103.0**	**100.4**

* FY 2008 $6.1 million from allocations transferred to Fire

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